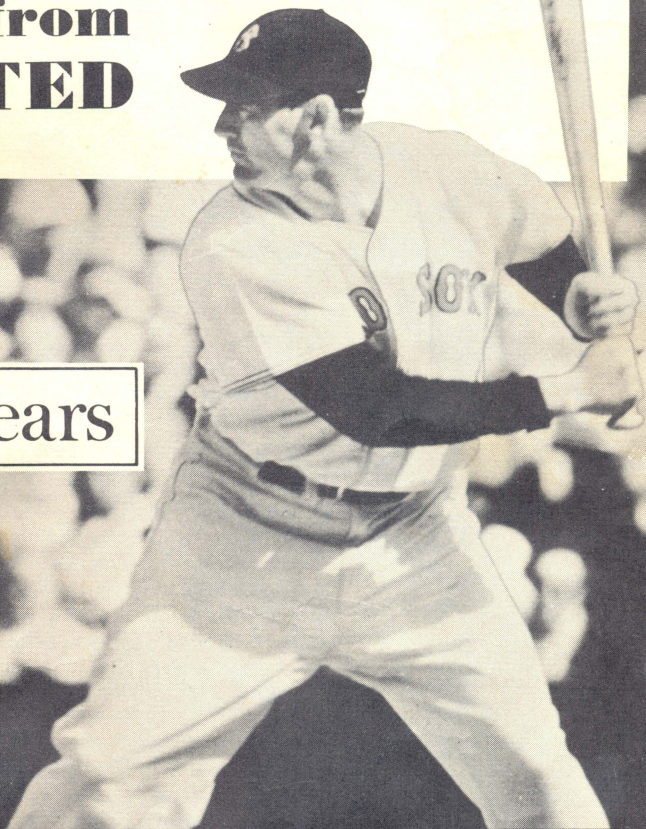


BATTING TIPS

from
TED

Sears



How to be a BETTER HITTER

by *Ted Williams*

CHAIRMAN, TED WILLIAMS SPORTS
ADVISORY STAFF

Courtesy of Sears, Roebuck and Co.



Meet

TED WILLIAMS

Lifetime
Base Hits
Total

2,654

Lifetime
Batting
Average

.344

Member
Baseball
Hall of
Fame

6

Times
League
Batting
Champion

Played in

18

All-Star
Games

TWICE

Voted League's
Most Valuable
Player

Ted Williams is known to every baseball fan as the most spectacular hitter in the past 30 years . . . the last of the .400 hitters!

Ted, elected to baseball's Hall of Fame in 1966 and named Player of the Decade in 1960, was given these honors by the veteran players and sports writers who vote these awards. These were fitting tributes to his all-around abilities in the game. Ted was one of only a few players to hit over .400 in a season, and the last man to do it since 1941.

After ending his active playing days with a lifetime batting average of .344, Ted "signed" with Sears as Sporting Goods Consulant. In clinics and demonstrations all over the country, he has been helping baseball-minded youngsters learn the secrets of his fabulous batting success. He—and Sears—hope this booklet helps you to "get those base hits" more often!



on **HOW TO BE A BETTER HITTER**

“Thousands of words have been written about the business of hitting a baseball. The art of putting the ‘fat of the bat’ on the ball—at the right instant—has been studied by expert coaches and outstanding players ever since the game began.

“What I have to say here is the result of my own experiences in baseball. These are my *own* ideas and conclusions, after over 20 years as an active baseball player.

“*Hitting* has been my chief interest in baseball since I began to play as a boy in grade school. I *like* to hit; I’ve always wanted to be a hitter. Other than winning a game, a good, solid base hit is more thrilling to me than any other single experience in playing baseball.

“I believe that I’ve worked as hard and practiced as much to improve my hitting as any player I’ve ever met. Yet, if I had it to do over again, I’d probably *practice hitting* even more than I did!

“Like everything else that one learns to do well, good hitting depends on practice more than any other factor. Still, you must learn the *fundamentals* of being a good hitter first. We hope this booklet gives you a better understanding of these fundamentals and gets you started on the right track.”

Best of Luck
Ted Williams



Your PHYSICAL “EQUIPMENT”

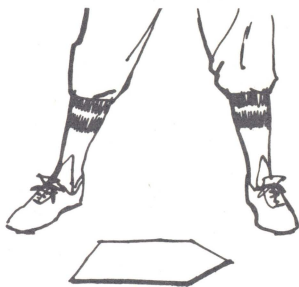
No one can be a good athlete without the right physical “equipment.” Being “big and strong” aren’t enough, however. In fact, some of the greatest baseball sluggers were average-size or even small men. What’s important is knowing how best to develop and use your natural ability. Here, too, you should remember four important, basic points:

① Develop Quick, Strong Hands



Develop quick, strong hands and wrists to generate the speed of your bat and give it true power. Swing fast and take an “honest cut” at the ball. A sure, quick swing gives you more time to study each pitch, too. That way, you won’t be fooled by the pitcher so often.

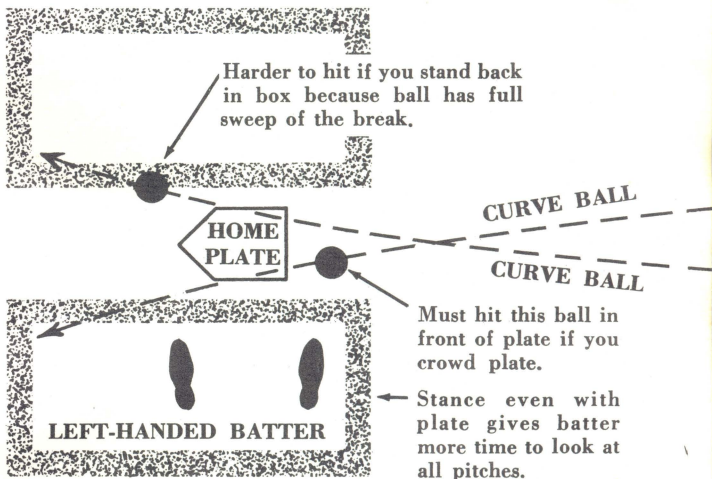
② Keep Your Weight Well Balanced



Stand comfortably at the plate. Keep your weight balanced forward, on the balls of your feet, so that you never lose your balance when swinging. You will lose all your power if your weight is on your heels.

③ Keep the Plate Well Covered

Keep the plate well covered, but don't crowd it. Some ball players prefer to stand well back or toward the front of the batter's box, but I'd rather stand about even with the plate. That way, I'm in the best position to go for *any* type pitch that's in my strike zone.



Keep the pitcher's target as small as possible. The farther back you stand the bigger an area you have to cover. It's also tougher to judge whether a ball is catching the corner, and "breaking stuff" breaks bigger. If you crowd the plate you must hit the ball when it's in front of the plate, giving you less time to look at the pitch and the pitcher more of a chance to fool you.

④ Always Keep Your Eyes on the Ball

Keep your eyes on the ball from the moment the pitcher winds-up to the second you hit the ball. Remember to keep your head steady, your stride not too long. Step toward the pitcher. Keep front shoulder aimed at the pitcher until the start of your swing with the thought in mind of hitting the ball back through the pitcher's box.



Your MENTAL “EQUIPMENT”

Besides his physical equipment a hitter also carries his mental “equipment” with him as he walks up to the plate. The manner in which a batter coordinates these two determines his effectiveness as a hitter.

THE THREE MUSTS ON THE MENTAL SIDE ARE:

① Wait for a Good Ball to Hit

If this sounds simple, just think about it for a minute. You have the advantage over the pitcher, so take your time and “look ‘em over.” If he doesn’t get the ball into your strike zone, he’ll put you on base with a “walk.”

② Take the Pitch *IF* . . .

Whenever the pitcher fools you or the pitch is in a tough spot for you to hit—and the count is less than two strikes—*take the pitch*. There’s always the chance that the ball will be outside your strike zone and the umpire will call it a “ball,” anyway.

③ If the Count Goes to Two Strikes . . .

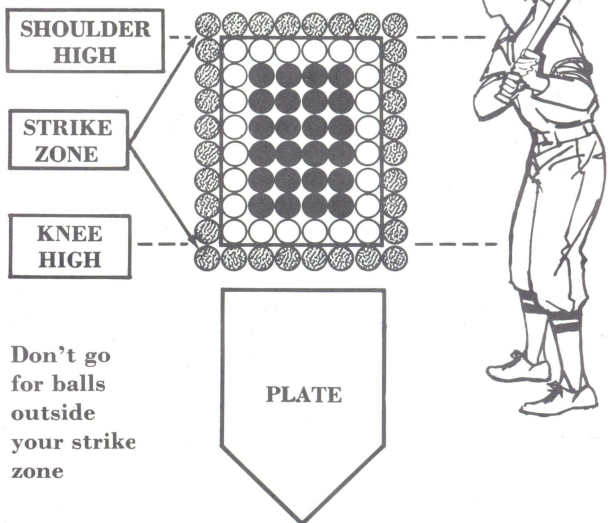
If the count goes to two strikes, choke up a little on the bat, sacrificing a bit of power for more bat control. *Don’t* make a conscious effort to guide the ball, but concentrate on hitting it squarely and driving it straight back through the pitcher’s box.



TIPS from TED

Know Your NEW Major League STRIKE ZONE

The strike zone is always 17 inches wide—the width of home plate—but the height varies with each batter. The new rule defines it as the distance from your knees to the top of your shoulders. It's something you must learn to judge well.



In the diagram above, the shaded balls are just outside the strike zone. If you consistently go for balls just 2 inches outside your strike zone, you're giving the pitcher a much bigger target. Furthermore, it is my opinion that up to two strikes you should wait for only those in black in the diagram, even though the other balls are within the strike zone. Knowing your own strike zone is the one thing you have that keeps the pitcher "honest." Little Leaguers—remember, your strike zone is still "letter high."



Keeping the “ODDS” IN YOUR FAVOR

Nearly every batter has a certain type of pitch within his strike zone that he finds hard to hit. For some, it's a high-inside pitch . . . for others, it's anything low-and-away.

You're the best judge of the kind of pitch that gives *you* the most trouble. As I mentioned earlier, if the count is less than two strikes, *take the pitch*. The same holds true if you've been fooled by the pitcher and the ball you thought would be outside actually caught the corner.

Your Strike Zone Works for You

Again, I want to stress the importance of making the pitcher throw the ball into your strike zone! Whenever the count is two balls—or three balls and one strike—you're “ahead” of the pitcher. *The odds are with you* . . . he *has* to come up with your pitch or he adds another ball to the count. If he does come through with it, you should be able to hit it. But, once he gets two strikes on you, you must hit *his* pitch.

How to Handle a Batting Slump

A batting slump means just one thing . . . the pitchers are fooling you more often. There are two ways you can work against a slump: Choke-up slightly on the bat or move away from the plate a bit. Either action lets you take a longer look at the pitch, by delaying the start of your swing. Try to hit back through the pitcher's box.

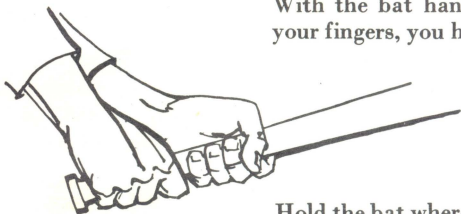


YOUR BAT... Weight and Grip

I'm often asked what weight bat is best to use. My advice is to use the kind you can handle best. If you can't get the exact weight bat you prefer, it's better to use one that's a bit *lighter* than one that's too heavy.



Take a good, firm grip on the bat, toward the fingers. *Don't* let the bat rest back in the heels of your palms. With the bat handle at the base of your fingers, you have better control.



Hold the bat where you can control it best. This is not necessarily at the very end of the handle. You should have a certain "feel" of the bat, for *control* is one thing you want most.



You should have about the same grip on the bat as if you were chopping wood or using a hammer. Be sure your grip is comfortable at all times.

TIPS
from
TED

CORRECT SWING and FOLLOW- THROUGH

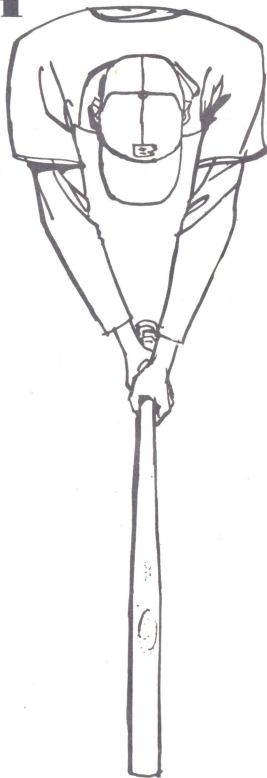
Arms Should Form a Straight “V” from Shoulders

When you pick up your bat and get set to take your grip, just extend both arms and let them form a simple “V” from the shoulders. Then, your arms should be straight and forming the “V” as your bat meets the ball. Your wrists should “break” just after contact . . . for added punch.

Your Stance at the Plate

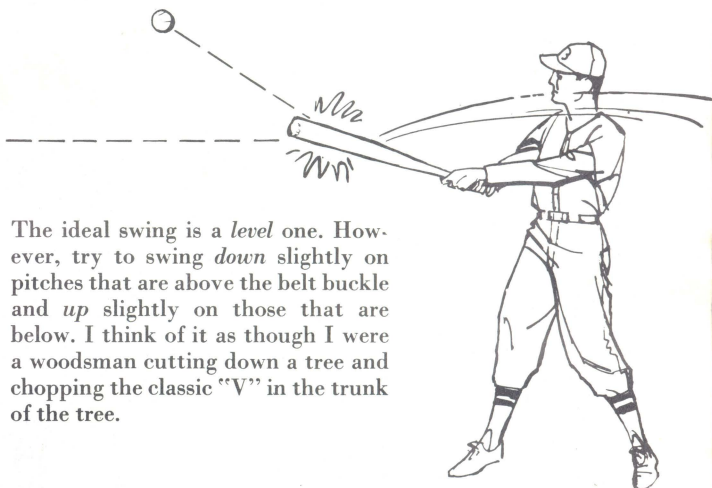
This is another thing you must determine for yourself. Experiment and find the stance that feels most comfortable and puts you in a “ready” position. If your stance is natural and you’re getting results—hitting anything that comes into your strike zone—I’d say you’re all set.

Take the type stride that feels best to you . . . right towards the pitcher. Remember that *the shorter the stride, the better*. A short stride gives your head less chance to move and the eyes more chance to *stay on the ball*. The longer you can look at the ball before swinging, the less chance the pitcher has of fooling you.



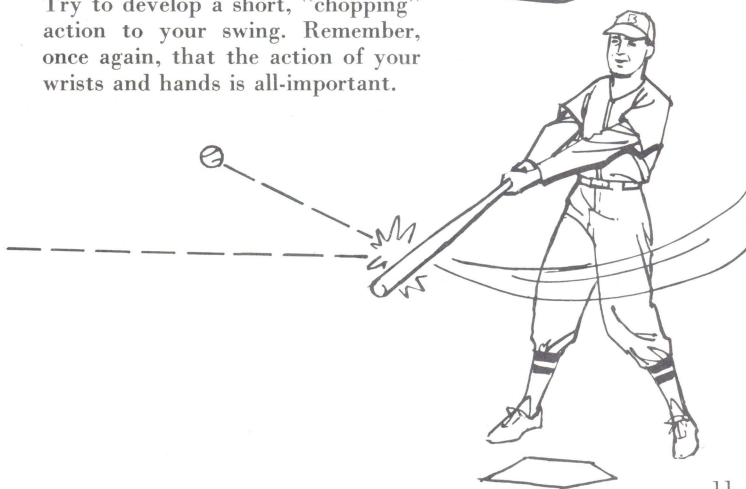
TIPS from TED

How to Hit HIGH and LOW PITCHES



The ideal swing is a *level* one. However, try to swing *down* slightly on pitches that are above the belt buckle and *up* slightly on those that are below. I think of it as though I were a woodsman cutting down a tree and chopping the classic "V" in the trunk of the tree.

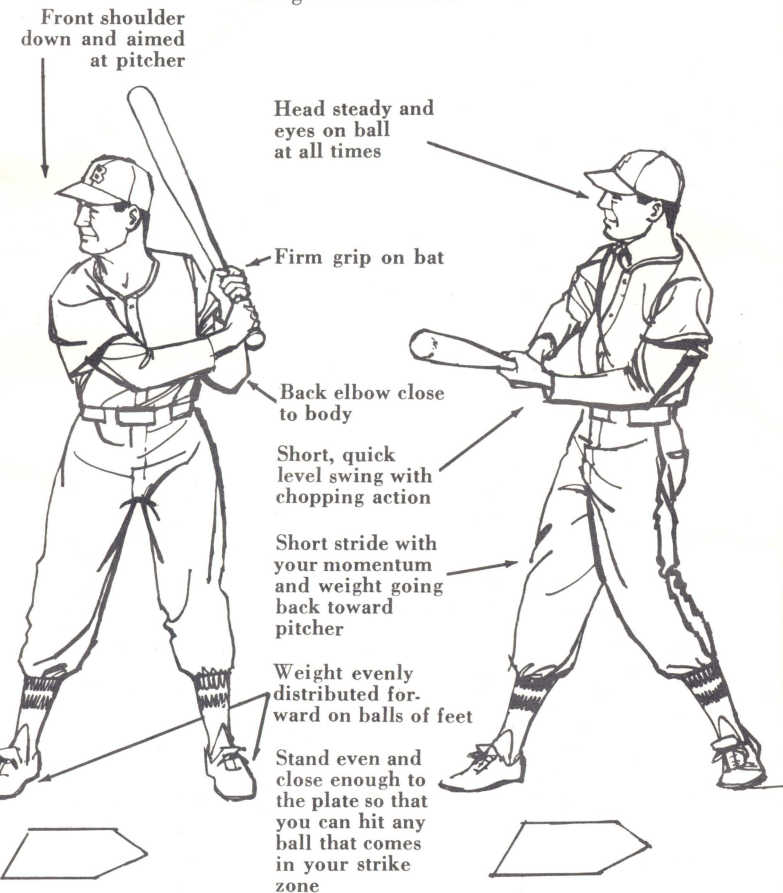
Try to develop a short, "chopping" action to your swing. Remember, once again, that the action of your wrists and hands is all-important.



TIPS from TED

ELEMENTS OF

The diagrams below illustrate the elements of a good swing. Notice how the back is kept straight at all times.



A GOOD SWING

USE A BAT YOU CAN HANDLE COMFORTABLY

Head steady and
eyes on ball

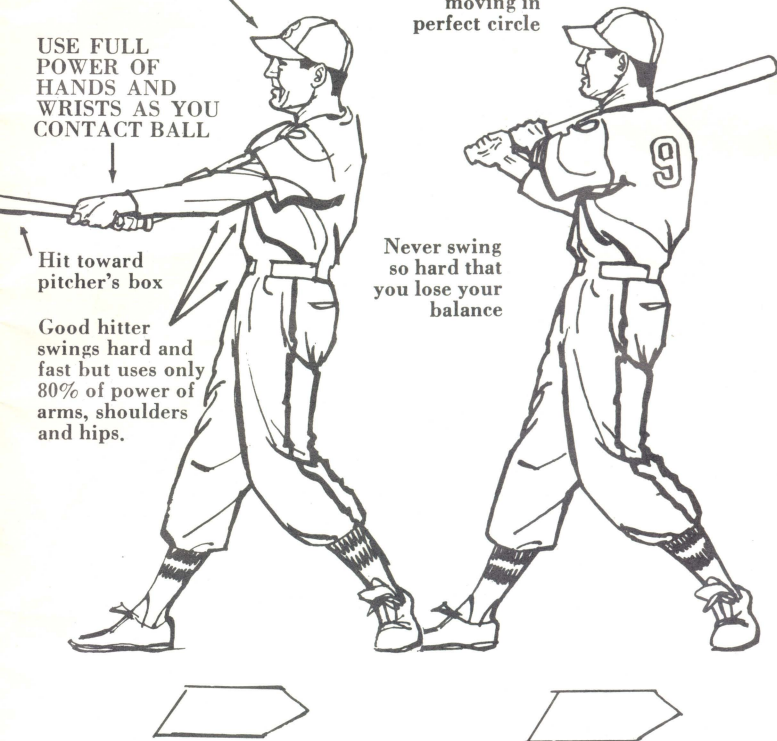
USE FULL
POWER OF
HANDS AND
WRISTS AS YOU
CONTACT BALL

Hit toward
pitcher's box

Good hitter
swings hard and
fast but uses only
80% of power of
arms, shoulders
and hips.

Smooth follow-
through with hips
and shoulders
moving in
perfect circle

Never swing
so hard that
you lose your
balance





What ALL GOOD HITTERS HAVE IN COMMON

I've watched, talked to and studied all of baseball's greatest hitters of the past 20 years or so. Here are the qualities I've noticed they *all* had in common, when in the batter's box:

- Every good hitter had quick hands and wrists
- They stood poised and well-balanced at all times
- Each one covered his particular strike zone well

Those are the really important things about a good batting swing. In addition, learn to keep your eyes on the ball from pitcher's mound to plate. Personal preferences in your stance, stride, swing, hand position and batter's box position are up to you. Practice and experiment until you discover what's best and most comfortable for *you*.

How Hard Should You Swing?

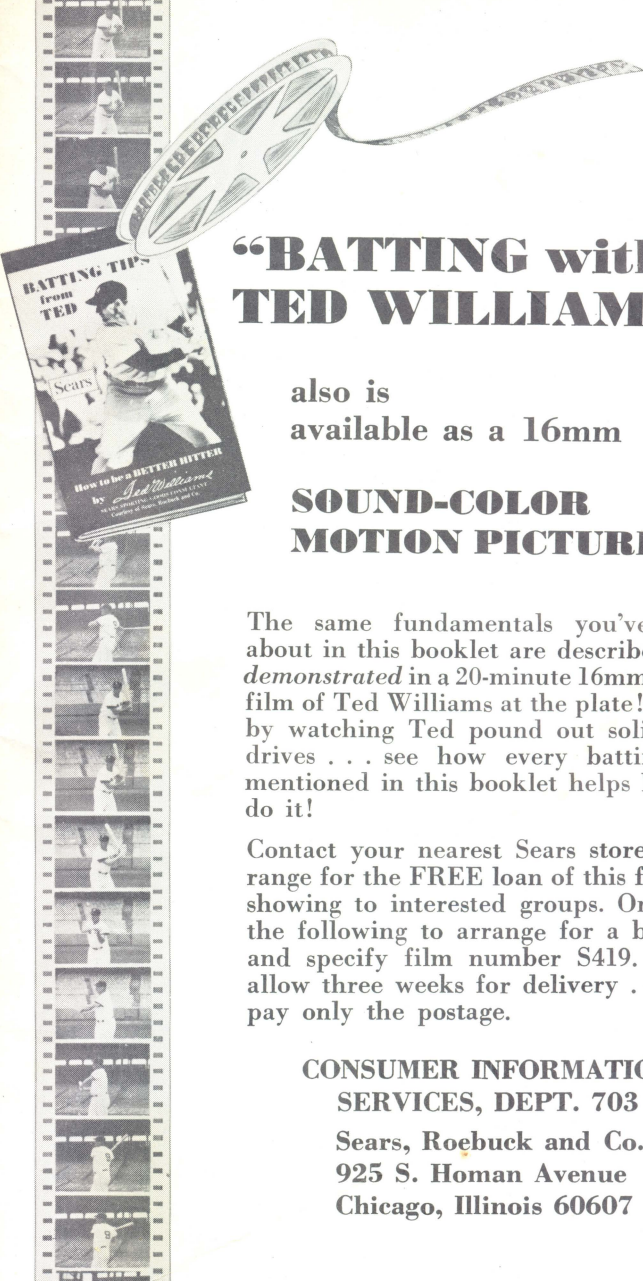
Never swing so hard at a pitch that you're thrown off-balance and lose your timing and control. Always feel you have a little "something" left after taking a cut at the ball. Then, if you connect, you're "off to the races!"

However, don't be lazy with your *wrists and hands*, for here's where your *real* power lies! Don't keep making the same mistakes every time you're at bat. Learn to recognize what you're doing wrong and *correct* it!

Stay in Good Physical Condition

Whenever you get the chance, practice swinging with an over-weight bat . . . about eight to ten ounces heavier than the one you'd normally use in a game. This is the best way to get stronger hands and wrists. Other ways to strengthen your hands and wrists include finger push-ups, squeezing a rubber ball and rolling up a weight suspended from a cord.

Your *general* physical condition is all-important, too. Get all the rest you need and get it regularly. Eat a well-balanced diet. Study the fundamentals outlined in this booklet and remember . . . *practice, practice, practice!*



“BATTING with TED WILLIAMS”

also is
available as a 16mm

SOUND-COLOR MOTION PICTURE

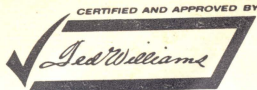
The same fundamentals you've read about in this booklet are described *and demonstrated* in a 20-minute 16mm sound film of Ted Williams at the plate! Learn by watching Ted pound out solid line drives . . . see how every batting tip mentioned in this booklet helps him to do it!

Contact your nearest Sears store to arrange for the FREE loan of this film for showing to interested groups. Or, write the following to arrange for a booking and specify film number S419. Please allow three weeks for delivery . . . you pay only the postage.

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